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1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon
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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BOCC MEETING MINUTES

1:00 PM

MONDAY June 23, 2025

Allen Room
Live Streamed Video

Present were Commissioners Anthony DeBone, Patti Adair and Phil Chang. Also present were Deputy County Administrator Whitney Hale; Senior Assistant Legal Counsel Kim Riley; and BOCC Executive Assistant Brenda Fritsvold.

This meeting was audio and video recorded and can be accessed at the Deschutes County Meeting Portal: www.deschutes.org/meetings.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair DeBone called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

CITIZEN INPUT: None

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. ODOT Region 4 Project Updates in Deschutes County

Omar Ahmed, Region 4 Area Manager for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), provided information on projects planned for 2027-2030, including: warning signs and delineators on Dodds Road (US 20 to Alfalfa Market Road); a left-turn lane and LED stop sign at NW Lower Bridge Way (19th to 31st); a barrier north of O'Neil Highway on US 97 at NW Galloway Avenue; and a signal replacement, right-turn lane, ADA ramp and pedestrian improvements at US 20/3rd Street and Empire Way.

In response to Commissioner Adair, Ahmed said ODOT will repave US 97 just north of the recently completed intersection with US 20. Commissioner Adair added that the signage at this location needs to be more clear for those accessing US 97 and US 20 from Empire.

Ahmed described the O'Neil Highway project on US 97 at NW Galloway Avenue north of Redmond, saying this will involve turn restrictions to enhance safety as well as a barrier from O'Neil north to Galloway.

Responding to Commissioner Chang, Ahmed confirmed that ODOT is hearing concerns about the reduced lane width which will result from the new barrier installation. Saying these improvements were needed years ago, Ahmed said ODOT is continuing discussions with the City of Redmond but the State does not plan to change the design.

In response to Commissioner DeBone, Ahmed said the right-of-way is on a slope, and the project is further complicated by the presence of utilities, an irrigation crossing, and EFU zoning on one side of the highway.

Continuing, Ahmed summarized a project for 24 driver feedback signs throughout the county for a budgeted amount of \$1.033 million. He additionally summarized a project to install ADA ramps in Bend, Redmond, Prineville and Sisters, said that a center median barrier will be installed on US 97 between Yew and Quarry just south of Redmond, and provided an update on the US 97--Lower Bridge Way / NW 10th Street project in Terrebonne.

2. Courthouse Expansion Update

Eric Nielsen, Capital Improvement Manager, provided information on recently completed and ongoing work involving the Courthouse expansion project, including the concrete decks for the first and second levels.

Cory Loomis listed upcoming work over the next eight to ten weeks, including exterior framing and sheathing, and reviewed the project schedule.

Commissioner Adair asked what percentage of the project is completed at this point. Loomis said that varies according to the project component—some components are more than half completed and others a bit less than half.

Nielsen then shared updated information on the project budget, including three change orders which totaled \$524,000, noting that some of these costs will be covered by the State.

Commissioner Adair asked about the rebid of the painting work. Loomis explained that the initial low bidder was determined to be not responsive, and seven companies submitted bids in the second round.

3. Four Rivers Vector Control District Operations Review and Board Appointments

David Doyle, County Counsel, explained the authority of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to remove members of the Four Rivers Vector Control District Board under certain circumstances. Noting the District Board has one current vacancy and that the term of another position ends on June 30th, he referred to allegations made about the operations of the Board and said it is best practice to not allow a married couple to serve on the Board.

Commissioner DeBone noted that the submitted complaint against the Board Chair has been withdrawn.

Commissioner Chang said it appears that the aforementioned complaint has been resolved after an apology was requested and issued. While he did not see any action needed by the BOCC based on the withdrawn complaint, he viewed today's discussion as an opportunity to review the operations of the District and its Board and encourage improved operations and transparency.

Commissioners Adair and DeBone agreed that it is not best practice to have a married couple serving on the Board, especially while their daughter-in-law is the office manager.

Rodney Dieckhoff, president of the District Board, relayed the history of the Board and efforts to continue District operations despite resignations of Board members.

Commissioner DeBone reminded that he had offered to serve on a budget committee for the District, but the District Board decided not to establish a budget committee although it should have one. He referred to apparent resistance to providing financial information and said that does not reflect an appropriate culture.

Commissioner Chang agreed that how the District is being governed is the concern, not the services which are being provided. He asked if the BOCC can help improve this situation beyond appointing new Board members.

Saying that either the husband or the wife who are both serving on the Board need to step down, Commissioner Adair said it will help to have three new members on the District Board.

In response to Commissioner DeBone, Lauri Dieckhoff, member of the District Board, said the District Board only oversees the operations manager, and the operations manager had hired the office manager.

Eva Wild Crain, member of the District Board, narrated her experience of serving on the Board and said that the Board hired the office manager after the job had been posted for only nine days. The operations manager was hired months later.

Commissioner Chang said while he appreciated that this is a small district with a limited capacity due to its restricted area and population, Board members must be able to review financial information.

ADAIR: Move to reappoint Eva Wild Crain to the Four Rivers Vector Control District Board and appoint Steven Emerson to the vacant position of the Board

CHANG Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes
CHANG: Yes
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 – 0

After voluntarily stepping down from her position on the District Board, Laurie Dieckhoff said previous Board member Amy Varner is employed by the District's bank, and accordingly is not allowed to serve on the Board because her employer benefits from the District's business.

Commissioner DeBone said Varner's employment is not a conflict at the Board level. He added that any of the five Board members should be able to view all of the District's financial transactions.

Commissioner Chang agreed that Varner's employment at the bank is not a problem so long as adequate controls are in place to guard against inappropriate actions. He agreed that every Board member should have free access to the District's financials.

Commissioner Adair added that Varner is highly recommended by the County Treasurer, who has worked with her.

Discussion ensued regarding Varner's recent resignation from the Board and reappointing her to the position just vacated by Laurie Dieckhoff. Rodney Dieckhoff said he and Varner had a personal agreement which she would violate if she accepted being reappointed.

ADAIR: Move to appoint Amy Varner to the position on the Four Rivers Vector Control District Board vacated by Laurie Dieckhoff

DEBONE: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 – 0

Saying that the District now has a five-person Board, Commissioner DeBone hoped that it will establish a budget committee and stated his availability to serve on such a committee.

4. Proposed Policy Updates: F-4, HR-15, GA-3, GA-21

Nick Lelack, County Administrator, presented updates to the following County policies:

F-4 – Capital Asset Policy

HR-15 – Travel Time Compensation Policy

GA-3 – Communications Policy

GA-21 – Social Media Policy

In response to questions, Lelack said an FAQ will be provided with regard to the travel time compensation policy changes.

5. Treasury Report for May 2025

Bill Kuhn, County Treasurer, presented the Treasury Report for May 2025.

In response to Commissioner Adair, Kuhn said the LGIP account is currently over its limit. Chief Financial Officer Robert Tintle explained that the account is presently holding tax payments for distribution to other taxing districts, and the County is allowed to be temporarily over the limit before those revenues are distributed.

6. Finance Report for May 2025

Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Finance Report for May 2025.

Commissioner Adair noted that the Fair's RV Park Fund states zero income and asked if the County is still offering RV and boat storage at the Fair. Kuhn said the County ran into an insurance issue last fall and as a result has not stored any privately-owned RVs at the Fair since last winter.

OTHER ITEMS:

- **Sheriff Retirement and Appointment of Interim Sheriff**

Commissioner DeBone said Sheriff Kent van der Kamp has announced his retirement date at the end of July, and the BOCC will be responsible to appoint an interim successor until the voters select a replacement Sheriff at the next general election.

Commissioner Adair said the Deschutes County Sheriff's Employees Association (DCSEA) is hosting a public event on July 14th to interview potential candidates for the position of Interim Sheriff. This event may be moved up to July 7th.

Commissioner Chang said the DCSEA event will be a valuable opportunity for everyone in the community to understand who the potential candidates are. Referring to the significant advantage of incumbency, he suggested that the Board discuss its openness in appointing someone who is interested to run for election. He also suggested that the Board consider requiring the submittal of written statements from each potential candidate, which could be made available to the public.

The Commissioners agreed to discuss this matter further at its meeting this Wednesday.

- **ODOT memo for Fort Thompson Lane re: access to/from Highway 97**

Commissioner DeBone referenced a letter received from the Oregon Department of Transportation regarding access to/from Highway 97 to County-owned property at Fort Thompson Lane and asked if this needs to formally come before the Board.

Commissioner Chang reminded that last year, the County discussed submitting an application for a State Parks and Recreation grant but did not do that as this

question of access was not yet answered. Now that the question has been answered, the County can consider submitting an application in the current grant cycle for funds to design and plan a campground at this site.

In response to Commissioner Adair, Commissioner Chang said the County would need to contribute matching funds if a grant was applied for and received.

Commissioner Adair did not support applying for such a grant.

Summarizing that the proposal is to use County-owned land for a market-rate recreational campground off of Fort Thompson Lane, Commissioner DeBone supported the private sector pursuing this kind of project.

Commissioner Chang said establishing a developed campground could help thwart the use of land by unauthorized encampments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURN:

Being no further items to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 pm.

DATED this 29th day of July 2025 for the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.

ATTEST:


RECORDING SECRETARY


ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR


PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR


PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER